(b) Government of Maharashtra has taken several steps to enhance inland fish production inlcuding stocking of fingerlings/fish seed as per optimum requirements in ponds/reservoirs. The breeding grounds in inland sector are also being protected. In marine sector, the Maharashtra State is implementing Marine Fishing Regulation Act, 1981 to ban fishing by mechanised fishing crafts during the monsoon season to protect and conserve the marine fisheries.

(c) and (d) The present cold storage facility is not sufficient, and Government of Maharashtra has proposed construction of three cold storage and three ice Factories.

Rate of interest Charged by **NCDC**

4132. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is true that NCDC charges a very high rate of interest on its lendings to the States for development of Cooperatives;

(b) what is the present rate of interest charged by NCDC; and

(c) whether NCDC is considerig to reduced its present rate of interest to make Cooperatives viable and sustainable?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) No, Sir, Existing effective interest rates charged by NCDC are as follows:—

SI. No.	Scheme	Rate of Interest
(i)	Under-developed States and Weaker Sections programmes	14.25%
(ii)	Working capital loan upto one year and assistance for computerisation	15.00%
(iii)	Other programmes/States	15.50%

(c) Does not arise.

Peculiar Growths in Brinjal Plant

† 4133. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) what is the reaction of Government on the news-item captioned "Baingan ki paudh mein ajibogarib phal lagne se krishi vigyani bhi hairan" published in Dainik Jagran dated 9th March, 2000;

(b) whether Government have conducted any inquiry in this regard; if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is the mystery behind the contradictory statements of Government and the farmers; and

(d) what steps have been taken by Government to prevent the recurrence of such events in future ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) The Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Ujwa, Delhi procured brinjal seed of variety Pusa Purple Long (PPL) from National Seeds Corporation, New Delhi. The seedlings were raised at Ujwa farm for supply to the farmers. The said farmer procured brinjal seedlings in July 1998. On the basis of a complaint received in December, 1998 during Farmers' Training Programme, the KVK officials visited the field and fruits of different colour and size were observed in a few plants. The variation in fruit shape, size and colour sometimes occur due to temperature variation which is difficult to identify at seedling stage.

(c) The facts of the case are :

1. Brinjal seedlings were supplied to farmers and others on demand, but no such complaint has been received.
2. The farmer purchased 12.5 kg of brinjal seedling of variety PPL for Rs. 500/- as against seedlings of Rs. 1700/- reported in the news item.
3. One bag of 40 kg wheat seed costing about Rs. 480/- was supplied free of cost to the farmer for conducting Grow-Out Test (quality test), as against Rs. 5000/- reported in the news-item.
4. Under a separate scheme on frontline demonstrations of oilseeds (Mustard), subsidy @ Rs. 900/- demonstration for critical inputs is provided to the farmers. Two demonstrations with subsidy of Rs. 1800/- were assigned to the said farmer and his son.
5. In view of item 4 above, no installment of compensation has been made to the said farmer.

(d) Quality seed will be produced at KVK farm to ensure quality before supply of seed to the farmers.